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mountains every climate, to afford the most striking and remarkable contrasts that it is possible to imagine. Here uprising tall grim mountains, capped with clouds, hard, cold flinty, but diversified by strips of verdure, hot, barren, arid, but cooled by calm delicious water; here a desert as blank as the Sahara; there the most fertile country in the world, where vines, and olives, and sugar-canes, and bananas, and all sorts of tropical plants are flourishing; here a palm-tree bestowing its grateful shadow; there a heavy snow-drift and the thermometer below freezing point; here the stately palaces, the handsome bridge, the decorated street, the noble costume, the gay groups, the delightful life of Lima, the city of Pizarro; and there the wretched, miserable hovels of the toiling miners, who labour amid the noxious vapours of unhealthy mines, and are yet but a half-savage people.

THE ÆRONAUT.

BY ADELBERT STIFTER.—TRANSLATED BY
MARY HOWITT.

CHAPTER I.—A NIGHT-PIECE.

ABOUT ten o'clock one fine June night, a large cat crept along the roof and gazed at the moon. One of its eyes, on which the moonlight fell, glittered like a green Will-o'-the-Wisp, whilst the other was as black as pitch. Arrived at the corner of the roof, he stared in at a window, out of which I was staring. Fixing his large friendly eyes on me, he seemed to ask, as if in surprise, "How is it, my old playmate and companion, that you look out of the window into the dark night with that face of yours, which always used to lie at rest on the white pillows when I happened to pass by on my nightly rounds?" "Why, you must know," replied I to his mute question, "that times have altered much; the white pillows lie there undisturbed on my bed, and the full moon throws the misty shadow of the window-panes on them instead of on my slumbering countenance, which I am obliged to hold out of the window three parts of the night to look at the heavens; for there will rise the rarest and the strangest star that you ever saw. It will not shine, but if one were to judge by merit, there is something in it which is more radiant than moon and stars altogether; aye, more radiant even than your eyes, most worthy friend!"

Thus I spoke to the cat, and he turned towards me his eyes, larger and more friendly than before, so that they shone like carbuncles, rubbing his soft fur against my hand, and purring whilst I continued to caress him. "One sees so much in a long moonlight night, my dear Tom," resumed I; "you must know that yourself, if you are a cat of any observation; and in thus waiting and gazing at the heavens, more particularly as the expected planet does not make its appearance, I have time and leisure enough to watch and study the course of increasing night."

But as I explained all this to my friend the cat, I do not see why I should not explain it to a much dearer human friend—before whom this page may some time be placed; why I should not tell him how a foolish and unfortunate circumstance chains me to this window, and fixes my eyes all night on the heavens.

It may be foolish, but any one would sit here as I do—that is to say, if he had previously experienced what I have.

Time hangs heavily as lead!

I came up far too early; even while the human crowds were swarming in the streets below, forming a strange contrast to the sweet moon which already showed her golden face between two huge columns of smoke, and shone in at my window.

By degrees every thing human wrapped itself in its night-chrysalis, and only here and there rose the voices of a few boon companions who were looking for the way home; then commenced that time so dear to philosophers and poets—the night-stillness.

The moon rose at last high above the roofs in the blue sky;

a glittering and flickering began everywhere, silver shot through the clouds, streams of silver poured from every roof, and glittering spangles flew from the roof opposite, the church-spires, and the lightning conductors.

A thin atmosphere of silver hung over the whole town, like a veil covering the hundred thousand slumbering hearts. The only point of gold in the sea of silver was the burning lamp in the garret yonder, where the poor washerwoman's son lay at the point of death.

However beautiful all this was, the hours became each one longer than the other; the great shadows of the chimneys had long since turned round, the silver moon was already rolling down the second half of the dark arch—there was a death-like stillness—only I and that lamp were still watching. But of that for which I waited there was no appearance.

The great town lay before me in the magical uncertainty of the moonlight—one might almost have heard it breathe—but the heavens remained a glittering solitude, as they had been the live-long night.

Still I waited; every minute the silence seemed deeper. The moon visibly neared the horizon. A patch of fleecy clouds floating southward in the blue firmament were gently lit up, and distant cloud banks, which since evening had hung and spread themselves on the horizon, and had long reflected the departed sun, now drank up the moonlight, and pale, tender light flowed through them.

Now it struck two o'clock, and Tom came. This night I felt quite a regard for him. That dumb conversation chronicled at the commencement of this sketch began between us; certainly it did not last long; we both of us soon tired of our silent communications, and each pursued his own fancies.

The widow's lamp was in the meantime extinguished, and I feared that a far different lamp would soon be lighted, for in the east a suspicious grey began to creep upwards as if it were morning; the air, till now so warm and heavy, roused itself; I felt it blow doubly cool from the morning on my face, and the rushing sound of the little brooks was carried distinctly from the opposite hills.

Then suddenly it seemed to me as if a dark body rose slowly into a band of clear sky between two long cloud-banks. I seized my telescope in haste, and pointed it towards that part of the firmament; stars, clouds, the glittering heavens flew past the glass; I minded them not, but sought anxiously for that spot, till at length I came upon a great black globe.

It is correct, then! One prophecy comes true! Against the pale, tender, early morning sky, scarcely more tinted than a peach-blossom, is traced a large, dark ball, rising almost imperceptibly; and under it, hanging by invisible cords, trembling and shaking in the glass, is the car—a mere speck in the heavens, scarcely more than a shred of paper—bearing three human lives, and might shake them off even before the early morning, as naturally as a drop of water is shaken from that cloud beside it.

Cornelia—poor deluded girl! May God save and protect you.

I am obliged to lay down the telescope—it was dreadful not to be able to see the cords by which the car hung!

If the second fact be as true as the first, then may my heart say adieu!—for then shall I have seen and loved the most fickle of women!

I took up the telescope again, but the balloon was no longer visible; probably that upper cloud-bank had received it in its dark embrace.

I waited long, and sought for it in the heavens, but in vain; I saw it no more.

With strange feelings of anxiety and displeasure I laid down the glass and looked into the clear air, till at length another, a yet more radiant globe, arose and threw its glowing rays over the happy city, and shone into my window, and over an immense, clear, glorious, empty heaven.

CHAPTER II.—A DAY-PIECE.

THE youth from whose journal the above has been extracted, was a young artist, scarcely yet two-and-twenty, but to all

appearances barely eighteen. From among a mass of light hair, that he wore in almost boyish curls, looked out an unspeakably open-hearted face, glowing with health, and ornamented with the first promise of a beard, which covered his upper lip, and of which he was fond, dark blue dreamy eyes, and a fair brow, on which rested all the innocence of his childhood. Indeed, he had brought with him to the great wicked city, from the solitude of the forest, all the simplicity of heart of his native valley, and as much knowledge as is usual at his age.

And so he sate, early in the morning after that, to him, so memorable a night, in his attic—which by-and-bye was filled with warm sunlight—leaning back in an old-fashioned chair, the innumerable gilt nails of which threw back the morning light in a glorious halo round him.

His hands were resting on his knees, and his eyes gazing listlessly on the blank canvas that stood on his easel before him;—but it was not of painting that he was thinking; the first deep melancholy fire of a passion that burned darkly in his heart shone in his eyes and illuminated his child-like countenance; on the unwritten page stood the first letters of the great town—the commencement of a life full of happiness and anxiety, but far distant from the peaceful oasis of his childhood.

Love is a beautiful angel, but it often proves an angel of death to a confiding and deceived heart.

His companion of the night, Tom, his landlady's cat, lay on the broad window-sill, and slept in the rays of the early sun. Not far off lay the telescope on the drawing of a cherub.

In the streets and lanes below the industry of a great capital was already stirring, wisely providing for the day's hunger and the day's luxury.

While the artist sat in his little room, which was now quite filled with golden sunlight, another scene was acting elsewhere: high up in the firmament, in the solitude of unbounded space, hovered the balloon, bearing its car and its adventurous travellers gently onwards. A death-like quiet surrounded them, only at times broken by the gentle rustling of the silk when the east wind wafted across its sides, or by a scarcely audible sighing of the silken cordage. Three persons, in deep silence, wrapped to the chins in thick furs, and wearing double green gæls, were in the car. Under one veil the soft, flowing outlines of a pale, beautiful woman's face, were indistinctly visible—with large, thoughtful, timid eyes. Sailing here, she no longer resembled that daring Cornelia, who, like her Roman namesake, longed to rise above her sex, and, like her heroic sons, endeavoured to burst the bonds of oppression, and who wished at least to show by her own example, that woman may proclaim herself free from those arbitrary bonds drawn around her for centuries by selfish and hard-hearted man—free, but compromising nothing in virtue and womanly nature. She was no longer what she had been scarcely half an hour before, for everything had proved different to her expectation.

In order to avoid any intrusive observation, it had been determined that the ascent should take place in the earliest dawn; and the beautiful maiden stood by scarcely able to repress her beating heart in the novel excitement of that which was about to happen. Still it was an anxious moment to the few spectators who were present when the frail silk swelled into an enormous globe, and dragged fiercely at the ropes which bound it to the earth.

Strange looking instruments were brought forth and secured to the car.

A fine, handsome man, usually mild, careless and happy—to-day pale and serious—walked several times round the machine, and proved its strength in various places. At last he inquired from her if she still felt the same wish? She answered by a firm "Yes," to which he replied by a strange look of admiration, and then led her respectfully to the car, remarking that he would not now trouble her with the warning which he had given her a fortnight before, as she had, without doubt, duly considered it. Waiting for several seconds, but receiving

no answer, he, too, stepped into the car, and an old man was the third and last. Cornelia looked on him as a familiar grown grey in wisdom.

All was now in readiness; the machine in order. Cornelia cast one look at the trees which stood round, as it were, looking on in the greyness of morning. Her companion exclaimed, "Loosen the ropes, let the brave Condor fly, in God's name!"

It was done; and the giant fabric, seized by the thousand hands of the breeze, trembled, bent sideways for a second, then, gently ascending, dragged the car from its mother earth, and gaining speed with every breath, at last shot straight up into the stream of morning light, and, at the same instant, the flames of the early sun fell on its surface and cordage, so that Cornelia was alarmed, imagining the balloon to be on fire. The lines of cordage cut the deep blue sky like flaming swords, and the globe shone like a huge sun. The retreating earth was vanishing, black and confused, in the darkness.

The moon lay far westward in a bank of clouds.

Floating higher and higher, the horizon gradually expanded. Two hearts, and, perhaps, a third, beat with the sublimity of the moment. Immensity began now to unfold itself by degrees, and the idea of space to operate in its full force. The aerial voyagers were approaching an archipelago of clouds which were sending their morning rays to the earth, but which up there seemed cold, glittering fields of ice, swimming in the fearful blue expanse of air, and facing the car with cracks and ravines. On coming nearer they moved and rolled into white drifting mists. At this moment the sun rose below, and the earth was seen far away on every side. It was still the familiar face of nature, as we see it from high mountains, but sweetly blushing under the radiant network of the morning sunbeams, which at this moment gilded the window of the small room in which the young painter sat.

"How high, Coleman?" asked the younger aeronaut.

"Almost the height of Mont Blanc," replied the old man, who sat at the further end of the car; "upwards of fourteen thousand feet, my lord."

"Very good."

Cornelia at these words looked carefully over the side of the car, and cast her eyes straight down through the air towards the forsaken brilliant earth to see if she could discern any familiar spot,—but behold all was strange,—the familiar spots were no longer to be seen, and above all, none of those tender threads that bind us to the beloved spot which we call home. The woods and forests travelled like great shadows towards the horizon; a wonderful labyrinth of hills and mountains, like waves rolling onwards, breaking in tawny flecks, probably fields; one stream alone was clearly visible, a narrow, trembling, silver thread, such as one often sees on moors and heaths in late autumn.

Over the whole hung a strange yellow light.

When she turned her eyes back into the car, she met the calm look of her companion which recalled her to herself.

He was preparing a telescope. This was the moment at which we found the balloon on leaving the painter's room. As we said, it was wafted onwards by a gentle current of air, without rising higher; for upwards of twenty minutes the barometer had not fallen.

The two men were occupied with their instruments. Cornelia wrapped herself more carefully in her furs, and leaned back in her corner.

The current of air played among her curls, and the balloon rocked gently. Of the emotions of her heart she could give no account. Immense, glittering, snowy expanses were ascending in the horizon. Cornelia could not understand them.

"It is the Mediterranean," said Coleman, "we shall only make an experiment on electricity; then you will see it more magnificent still; no longer silver, but flaming gold. In the meantime the younger aeronaut filled a small bottle with strong coffee, surrounded it with quick-lime, poured water on the lime, and by that means heated the coffee; he then added rum, and handed a cup of the hot, exciting beverage to Cornelia. In the intensely cold state of the atmosphere she

experienced an immediate benefit; from it a new life seemed to flow through her veins. Her companions drank also; they then conversed together in a low tone, and the younger nodded. On this the elder began to empty some sacks of sand which stood in the car over the side. The Condor rocked in the air, and then, as if with the magnificent sweep of its name sake, rose majestically into the highest ether;—and now the change of scene was sudden and overpowering.

Cornelia's first glance was towards the earth; it was no longer the well-known birthplace which she beheld; enveloped and glowing in a strange, golden haze, it appeared to stagger back; on its extreme the Mediterranean lay like a narrow brilliant band of gold. The whole was indistinct and fantastical. She drew back terrified as though a monster had met her eyes. Around the car, far on every side, floated and waved unearthly mists,—as seen from the earth, silver, fleecy clouds in the heavens. To these heavens she now turned her eyes,—but behold, they were no longer there! The whole dome of heaven, the glorious azure vault above our earth, had changed to a black chasm stretching away undefined and without bounds. That blessing which we enjoy so thoughtlessly on our own beautiful earth, the ocean of sunlight, was here withdrawn. As if in mockery the stars were visible, tiny, powerless points of gold, scattered here and there in the abyss; and the sun itself, lowering, without warmth, without rays, a sharply defined disc of metal, glowing and undulating at a white heat—it glared with a baleful light from the abyss, throwing the balloon into spectral contrast with the surrounding night, and tinting the three human countenances with a death-like hue, as in a magic lantern—but not a ray of warmth was retained in these desolate regions.

And yet—but the mind could scarcely comprehend it—it was still our own pure, beloved atmosphere in which they sailed, the same morning atmosphere that fans an infant's cheek.

The balloon had, as the old man observed, reached the upper cross currents of the air, and was driven along with fearful rapidity, as the inclined position of the car clearly showed, as well as the plunging and shivering of the silk, though it made no more sound than the sighing of a child,—sound there was none at this extreme altitude.

Turning from the sun, the awful stars alone met her sight, like spectres wandering by day.

"I am dizzy!" she said.

But they did not hear her. She drew her furs tighter round her to keep out the bitter, intense cold. Her companions were engaged in operations perfectly unintelligible to her, but it seemed to her that the young man at times gazed majestically into the darkness, and played poetically with grandeur and peril; the old man showed no sign of being moved.

At length, after a long, long interval of forgetfulness, the young man turned towards Cornelia, but she gazed at him with vacant, unmeaning eyes, and on her lips stood a drop of blood.

"Coleman," exclaimed the youth, as loud as it was possible to do at such an extreme altitude, "Coleman, we must descend—she is ill!"

The old man raised himself from his instruments and looked at her; it was a look flashing with anger, and with a deeply mortified countenance, he said: "I told you, Richard!—that woman could never bear the skies! Our experiment, which has cost so much, is still unfinished; such an ascent as we have had!—the calmest and most successful in my life—is thrown away. Of course, we must descend—she would die up here!"

"Open the valves!"

After these words he sat down, and holding fast the rope, drew the folds of his cloak round him. The young man hastily seized a green silk cord, and, like a giant falcon, the Condor fell a hundred fathoms through the atmosphere—then sunk deeply lower and lower.

His lordship, as it reached earth, held the unconscious Cornelia in his arms.

CHAPTER III.—A FLOWER-PIECE.

I SCARCELY know how much time had flown by since the ascent; but it happened early one morning, almost before the

grey dawn, that the young painter sat in the same old-fashioned chair with the gilt nails, and gazed on the canvas before him. This time, however, it was not empty, but displayed the outline of a large painting, and was already framed in a heavy gold border.

He worked at it like some one famishing for fame, and any one who could have seen his eyes wandering in ecstasy over his landscape, would have imagined that from those eyes had proceeded the warmth and tenderness which was so conspicuous in the painting. Often stepping back a pace, he examined the whole in a critical manner, and then with flashing eyes continued his work. It is a glorious sight when the angel of art takes possession of a beautiful unconscious youthful face, and illuminating it, raises the possessor far above the common every-day expression. The sun shone warmer and warmer into the room. About noon a servant entered with a small sealed note.

Leaving it open, he said—"Good; say that I will come;" and a deep red covered his face, the evidence of feelings he supposed hidden in the innermost part of his heart, and which latterly he had strenuously endeavoured to subdue.

The servant was gone, but the youth painted no longer.

At ten o'clock next day, carefully dressed in black, his hat placed on his light curling hair, he left the town, walked through the long airy street of a suburb, till he came to the entrance of a charming country-house. Ascending a flight of sunny steps, he opened the folding-doors of a large saloon hung with paintings. Here he waited to be announced. After a short time, a door on the opposite side opened, and an elderly lady entered. She held out her hand, and greeted him like a mother.

"Go in," said she; "go in, you are anxiously expected. You do not know, Gustave, what I have suffered! She actually carried out her intention—and then was so ill;—she must have seen dreadful things, and have been very, very far, for it took her three days and three nights to return; since her recovery she has been so kind and gentle, that I am often quite touched; but about the journey she never says the least word. Will you not go in to her?"

The youth had listened with a gloomy expression; when she finished speaking his countenance became still darker.

Striding across the room, he opened the door, and disappeared. The apartment in which he now found himself was large, and decorated with the most exquisite taste. At one window, in a forest of foreign plants, sat a young lady. She was dressed in white satin, which contrasted pleasantly with the dark green camelia leaves.

She rose as he entered, and advanced cordially to meet him. Her form was tall, full of a commanding patrician grace, but full also of that genuine modesty which is so enchanting.

Her countenance was expressive, but pale. Two large dark eyes looked towards the painter kindly. But his heart lay fettered by the past, his eye was cold and defiant; he did not perceive that she slightly trembled, either through humility or suffering.

For a moment they were silent. "We have not seen one another for some time," she said, softly; "and I have been rather unwell."

His only answer was a deep inclination.

"I hope you have been well," said she.

"I have," he replied.

She looked at him wonderingly, but said nothing; approached the camelias where her easel stood, arranged something that was already in order, put something straight that was not out of its place, examined the green leaves as if she sought for something, and then returned. He, however, stood exactly on the same spot, as some one who awaits an order, his hat in his hand; he had not changed his position a hair's breadth.

The lady breathed deeply, and then said more gently than before,

"Did you often think of us here?"

"I often thought," he replied, "of you and our studies. By this time the colours in your painting must be dried."

She crimsoned deeply, and exclaimed, hastily, "Are we to paint?"

Turning suddenly aside, the deep flush was only visible on her temples, and the displeased glance of her eye was only shown by the mirror. It was quite plain, and her dress itself sufficiently showed it; that she did not wish to paint; but when he put down his hat, approached the easel, had opened the case and taken out materials and colours; and when, after she had observed all this in silence, he handed the palette to her, she hastily turned back the sleeve of her dress, and taking the palette, sat down with indescribable haughtiness. Standing behind her, his face showed not the faintest trace of being moved. The painting was commenced. The elderly lady, Cornelia's nurse, occasionally came in.

The youth began as a master, calmly, and in a clear voice, to criticise those portions already placed on the canvas, and did so with more brevity and praise than was his wont; giving directions for what was now necessary in the painting, he shewed her the proper colours, and how they were to be mixed; she did as he desired.

"Good," said he.

The colours were placed side by side on the palette. The painting was commenced, and the room was in the deepest silence; only a few words broke the quiet, like falling drops in a grotto.

"Good—warmer—deeper;" after a time even these were no longer heard, and he pointed out with the handle of a brush what was to be joined or what separated, or he put on with his own hand a light or a shadow where it was necessary, and she was not confident.

He had attained his end. Any one seeing his eye—any one seeing his beautiful face looking over her shoulder, would have noticed in it a deep silent sorrow; but she did not turn her head, and they were surrounded only by unobserving walls.

As the spirit of misunderstanding stepping between two persons often seems only a small unimportant circumstance, and is not seen by them, or is not considered worthy of being destroyed by a breath or a movement,—so it often grows unnoticed until at last it stands between them like a dark shadowy untangible giant! Thus was it here. At first, it had seemed to him, as in a beautiful dream, that the commencement of those tender feelings which so indistinctly overburdened his heart, were visible in her; but it was only as in a dream! for then came her pride, her longing after freedom, her daring—all so far different from that which his retiring swelling heart told that it should be; so far, so entirely different, that he repressed every feeling, and now stood there as one who despised her—she, who continued painting without one movement of her head, and without uttering a single word. He pressed his teeth firmly together and thought, how heartily he hated this woman.

Hour after hour of the morning fled by; he heard her breathing but no second brought any change—only the same picture; the room was overpoweringly hot—and suddenly, he knew not why, he walked towards the window and looked out. It was as quiet outside as within. A dreary blue sky overhung the motionless green trees—he almost fancied that he was struggling to overcome a gigantic snake. All at once it seemed to him that he heard a sound as of something being dropped—he turned round; in truth, palette and brushes were laid down; and Cornelia was leaning back in her chair pressing her hands to her face; for a moment he gazed at her and she trembled,—then he approached her—but she did not move—nearer still but no movement; he held his breath and looked at those beautiful fingers pressed against the blooming countenance, and at last he saw that tears were trickling out between them. In an instant he was on his knees before her.

It is related of a fabulous flower of the desert, for years nothing but a barren shrub, that in one night it burst into blossom, trembling at its own happiness;—and so was it here! Anxiously he endeavoured to look under her hands upwards at her face, but he was not able; he gently took her arm to draw

away her hand, but she gently resisted him; then the glowing words burst from his lips: "Dear, beloved, Cornelia."

She only pressed her hands more firmly against her face, and the tears trickled down warmer and more plentifully than before.

But he—how did he feel? These tears gave him the deepest anxiety, and yet each one felt like a pearl of intoxicating delight in his heart. Where is the snake at the window? where is the dreary blue sky? The smiling vault rises over the world, and the green trees are cradled in a sea of splendour and glory.

He still held her arm, but no longer endeavoured to remove her hand from her face. She became calmer; at last all was quiet. Without uncovering her face she said, gently, "You never spoke to me as a friend concerning my masculine way of life."

"Let us not talk of it," exclaimed he; "it was foolish and too presumptuous on my part." "No! no!" said she, "I must speak—I must tell you that it shall be different. I am but a poor weak woman; how poor! how weak! even to that grey-headed old man. 'She cannot bear the heavens.'" Then she paused, and again the tears flowed. The youth drew down her hand; she did not oppose him, but her first glance at him startled her so that her tears ceased. How has he changed! From the boyish curls, the earnest, eager face of a man looked upwards, illuminated with a strange expression of the deepest feeling; but she also was changed,—in her proud dark eyes was the deepest humility, and never before had these proudly radiant planets gazed at him so softly, so tenderly, so helplessly devoted; they were speechless, the devouring flame of passion rose, the heart was powerless, a gentle attraction, a tender yielding, their lips met hotly together with an indistinct murmur, and the happiest moment of two human lives was come and gone.

The garland of gold and ebony was joined above their heads; the spark was struck, and they started back; they did not look at each other, but turned their eyes to the ground in silence: after a long, long pause, the youth first ventured a word, and in a low voice said, "Cornelia, what does this moment foretell?"

"The highest that it can," she answered, proudly.

"It is," said he, "the most beautiful moment that God ever marked in my life; but it seems to me that beyond this great happiness stands a deep enduring sorrow. Cornelia, how can I ever learn to forget this moment?"

"For God's sake, do not!" said she, alarmed. "Gustave, dear, only friend that I had in this wide earth, when blindly I endeavoured to raise myself above my sex—we will not forget it. I should hate myself if I could ever do so; and you preserve for me in love and truth your noble, beautiful heart."

He suddenly raised his eyes towards her, and stood before her almost more erect than before, like acting man, and exclaimed: "Perhaps this heart is richer than I myself knew! At this moment it has taken a determination which surprises me, but it is good. I will commence my projected journey immediately—even to-morrow. I can scarcely yet believe my new happiness; it is, perhaps, only a moment—a flash, in which two hearts have met, and then again darkness. Let us see what these hearts are. Lost, this moment never can be; but what may it produce? Let it bring what it must and can, and as certain as that a sun shines without, so certainly will it one day shine on the fruit of this flower. I only know that another world is without, other trees, a different atmosphere, and I a different man. Oh! Cornelia, help me to explain that wonderful starry heaven in my heart! so happy, radiant, glowing, as if it might flow out in creations as large as the universe itself, for, alas! I cannot do it; I cannot even express how boundless, how unspeakably, how eternally I love you, and shall love you as long as one fibre of this heart remains."

Cornelia was in the highest degree surprised at the youth and his speech. Though of the same age as himself, she was a full-blown flower—he at times was still a child. Intentionally or not, she had roused the deep feelings of love in his breast; in one moment he had become a man. Every instant he seemed to her to be more beautiful—his countenance full of

fire and love—and she looked at him with delight as he stood before her, so powerful, so beautiful, already glowing with future greatness of soul, still innocent as a child, and unconscious of the divine flame of genius which hovered on his brow.

Soul can only love soul, and genius can only be influenced by genius.

Cornelia was now also standing; she had raised her beautiful eyes to him, and everything that had been good and noble in her whole life—the unbounded fulness of a proud heart—lay in her smile, and he knew it not, but thought himself too poor ever to reward sufficiently that heart which there unfolded itself before his. But in this moment he inwardly vowed to strive while even a single breath remained in him—to stand before the whole world great in mind and deeds, that he might compensate her, she who gave her glorious life to him for no other pledge than his heart. In the meantime they had approached a window, and as deeply as each thought inwardly, so were they outwardly silent and embarrassed. How unaccountable are the feelings in their first purity! When the first transport of delight, the first love has been felt and is over, then follows a strange desire to fly, even from the beloved one, that the silent overpowering happiness may be felt in solitude.

Thus they stood at the window, so near to each other, and yet so far apart, when the entrance of the nurse recalled them to themselves. He was even able to talk of his intended journey and his plans; and when the nurse begged him to write and to describe the mountains, and woods, and rivers, as beautifully as he did in his walks, he glanced timidly at Cornelia, and saw that she blushed.

When at length the nurse was called away, he slowly took his hat, and said, "Adieu! Cornelia."

"A happy journey," said she; and added, "be sure and write to us."

She had not the courage to touch upon the past scene even by a single word; she dared not ask him to postpone his journey, and he would not confess that he would much rather have stayed. So they parted, only that in the doorway he turned round, and beheld the beloved form standing modestly among the flowers.

But when he was gone, she hastened to her picture of the Virgin, and sinking on her knees, before it, said: "Mother of mercies, mother of orphans, hear my vow; from this time I will remain a poor humble flower, that he may place it with pleasure in his noble poet's heart, and then know how unspeakably and eternally I love him."

And again her tears fell, but they were gentle, warm, and happy.

So separated two human hearts which had but just met each other. Who knows what the future may bring forth? Both hearts are innocent, and taken by surprise; both feel a glowing, single determination, to strive to the uttermost, that they may be worthy of and possess each other through eternity.

Deluded ones! Do you know the majesty or the deceits of the human heart?

CHAPTER IV.—A FRUIT-PIECE.

MANY years have passed since the above, but what of them? Who knows of the emulation and striving of these two hearts? Only one small sketch of a later time remains—and I give it gladly.

Some years ago I was in Paris, and happened accidentally to hear at a coffee-house a fierce dispute about the merits of two paintings in the Exhibition. As it always happens, one praised the first, another the second, but all agreed that the present age had seen nothing equal to them; and what excited their curiosity more than all was, that no one knew by whom they were painted.

"I know the artist," said a tall gentleman; "he is that pale man, who last summer used to be so much in the tower of Notre Dame, and who was so silent. People say that he is now in South America."

"The paintings are by Musard," said another; "he only wants to mislead the people."

"I should like to see Musard paint such pictures," shouted a third. "I tell you they are exhibited under a false name, but they are by a master hand."

Some laughed, others shouted, and when I left the coffee-house, I went to the Exhibition for the purpose of seeing these celebrated paintings. I easily found them, and truly they impressed me as powerfully as they did every one around me. They were both moonlight scenes—no! not paintings—real moonlight nights, but more poetical, more dreamy, and more magical, than I had ever seen before. A dense crowd was always before them, and it was singular to notice that an exclamation of delight burst from the lips of those of the lower classes who saw them, and who were struck by their perfect nature.

The first was a large town seen from above, a maze of houses, towers, cathedrals floating in the moonlight; the second a water-party, in an oppressive, electric, cloudy, moonlight summer night.

"Gustave R., from Germany," was in the catalogue; and it may be well imagined what a chain of recollections suddenly rushed upon me, when I read "Gustave." I knew the artist well. It is thus, thought I, that your love has shown itself! Unfortunate, deceived man! and our readers can easily explain, what all Paris at that time looked upon as an artist's whim, namely, that in each painting, the same cat was to be found—good, honest old Tom! I remained till nearly the hour of closing, and examined the other paintings. In passing the two pictures on my way out, I noticed that one of the attendants informed a lady who stood before them, that she must leave, as they were about to close. She lingered a moment, then tore away her eyes from the paintings and turned to go; never was I struck by more beautiful eyes; she let fall a veil, and was gone. I did not at the time suspect in the least who she was, and it is only now after many years have passed, that I can relate how that lady after her visit to the gallery drove to her home in the Rue St. Honoré, and how, after letting fall the curtains in her bed-room, she clasped her hands above her head, and buried her face deeply in the cushions of her couch. How all the gentle uncertain lights of these pure, chaste paintings flashed across her brain, like low reproachings from a soul which, though silent, speaks in lightning flashes which sink deeply, are always present, always flaming, and never forgotten like words!

Paris knew it not! when on that day its idolized beauty who inflamed thousands of hearts but only to play with them, appeared in some of its circles;—Paris knew it not that she had sat, in her darkened room, helplessly weeping scalding tears, which almost choked her yearning heart. But it was unavailing—unavailing! Calmly and unmoved, the power of that which she had seen stood before her, ever to be immovable, whilst far away among the primeval mountains of the Cordilleras wandered a strong, unknown, uncaring man, seeking a new heaven for his heart, unsatisfied, restless, and creative, but still stainless as ever.

THE APOLLO GALLERY AT THE LOUVRE.

ON issuing from the court of the Louvre, in the direction of the Seine, the visitor to Paris may have noticed gardens both to the right and left. That to the left extends to the extremity of the Louvre, then, forming an angle, stretches away under the celebrated Perrault Colonnade. That to the right, known as the Jardin de l'Infante, is bounded towards the west by a part of the Louvre which projects upon the quay, and in the first floor of this building is the Apollo Gallery. The ground floor is occupied by Greek and Roman sculptures. Formerly, both this and the floor above were comprehended under the name of *La Petite Galerie*. "The Little Gallery," says Sauval, "was commenced under Charles IX., and finished under Henry IV., by Chambiche, as far as the first story, which was covered in by a platform or terrace, which Charles IX.